GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3044
ANSWERED ON:05.12.2016
Protection of Languages
Mahto Dr. Banshilal

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

a) whether the Government is aware that several languages and dialects are on the verge of extinction including the list of such languages in the country; and if so, the details thereof;
b) the reasons for the threat and the reaction of the Government thereto;
c) whether there is any symbiotic relationship between culture and language and these languages which are on the verge of extinction also threaten the existence of those cultures to which they belong; and
d) if so, the details of the steps being taken by the Government to protect these languages and cultures which are on the verge of extinction ?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
(DR. MAHENDRA NATH PANDEY)
(a) to (d): Yes Madam. A list of endangered languages in India including critically endangered languages is given in the Annexure. Languages become extinct because either the speakers of these languages die or there are no first language speakers left. Once the language becomes endangered the culture is also endangered. The Government of India has initiated a Scheme known as "Protection and Preservation of Endangered Languages of India' (SPPEL). Under this scheme, the Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL), Mysore works on protection, preservation and documentation of all the mother tongues/languages of India which are spoken by less than 10,000 people. The Government has also initiated a project known as Bharatavani being implemented by the CIIL for all languages, especially the languages spoken by more than ten thousand persons, in the cyberspace. This project aims to build a searchable knowledge repository in and about all the languages in India in multimedia (text, audio, video images) formats through an online portal.
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